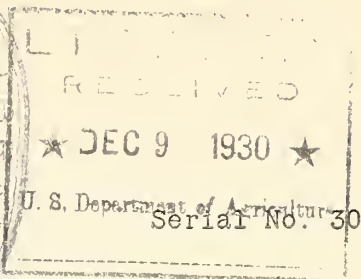
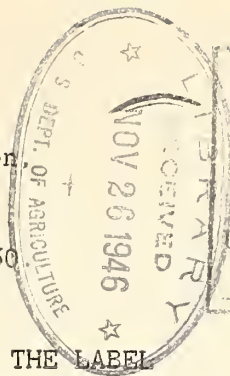


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Excerpt from a radio talk by  
W. R. M. Wharton, Chief, Eastern  
District, Food and Drug Administration,  
U. S. Department of Agriculture,  
through WJZ, New York and associated  
NEC stations, Monday, December 1, 1930



HOW TO READ THE LABEL  
Apples

My story today is about apples. And here is my read-the-label information on apples.

How do you, Mr. and Mrs. Consumer buy apples? Do you say to your grocer, send me a peck of apples? Or do you go to the grocery store and say, give me a basket of those apples, to which you point? I am going to tell you today the advantages to you in buying apples by varietal name and by grade. In the wholesale trade, apples are practically always bought and sold on the basis of values represented by the relative desirability of the product from a quality standpoint and this means on the basis of grades, condition, and varieties, for, my friends, McIntosh variety of apples is as much superior to Gano variety of apples as a silk gown is to a cotton one, and so also is the Delicious variety as much superior to the Ben Davis variety.

The requirements for U.S. Fancy apples are higher than for U.S. No. 1 apples, and those for U.S. No. 1 are higher than for U.S. Commercial apples. In view of these facts, can you not see how important it is that you buy apples by variety and grade and that you know the varietal and grade characteristics of the apples you are buying.

The United States Department of Agriculture through its Bureau of Agricultural Economics, has established definite grades for apples when packed in containers other than the standard Northwestern apple box. The purpose of the establishment of grades for apples, as is true when grades are established for other products, is to give a practical basis on which purchases can be made with complete understanding of the quality of the product to be delivered. The use of grades is almost always taken advantage of by dealers in their transactions, consequently, my friends, why isn't it your privilege and your obligation as the buyer for your family to use the same precautions and diligence in representing your family exchequer faithfully.

There are six United States grades for apples, namely, (1) U.S. FANCY, (2) U. S. NO. 1, (3) U. S. NO. 1 EARLY, (4) U. S. COMMERCIAL, (5) U. S. UTILITY, and (6) U. S. UTILITY EARLY.

U.S. Fancy apples must consist of apples of one variety which are mature but not overripe, carefully hand picked, clean, well formed, free

(over)

from decay, broken skins, and bruises, free from spray burn, stings, or other insect injury, disease, sun scald, and visible water core. These apples must also be free from injury due to russetting, limb rubs, hail, or mechanical or other means, and each apple must have the amount of color which is specified for each variety and which runs, in general, from 25% to 50% normal attractive color. In order to allow for variations incident to proper grading and handling not more than 10% by weight of the apples in any container of this grade may be below the requirements of the grade but not to exceed one-half of this tolerance or 5% shall be allowed for defects causing serious damage and not more than 1% shall be allowed for decay.

U.S. NO. 1 apples differ from U. S. Fancy apples in that they need to be only fairly well shaped, whereas fancy apples must be well shaped. U.S. No. 1 apples are required to be free from damage caused by the various conditions named, whereas U.S. Fancy apples are required to be free from injury only. Damage here means defects materially affecting the appearance. Injury means a less serious defect. The color requirements for Grade No. 1 are about one-half as strict as for U.S. Fancy grade. The variations or tolerances allowed are very slightly more liberal for U.S. Grade No. 1 than for Fancy Grades.

U. S. NO. 1 EARLY is provided for early varieties which may have no red color and which may not be mature but which meet all other requirements for U.S. No. 1 grade. Such apples are often used for cooking purposes rather than for eating out of hand.

U. S. COMMERCIAL apples are required to consist of apples of one variety which meet the requirements of U.S. Grade No. 1, except for color. This grade is provided for apples which are mature but which do not have sufficient color to meet the specifications of U.S. Grade No. 1.

U. S. UTILITY apples are required to consist of apples of one variety which are mature but not over-ripe and which are not seriously deformed. This grade differs from the U.S. No. 1 Grade in that the U.S. Utility grade requires freedom only from serious damage, note the word serious, resulting from any cause, and there are no color requirements for the Utility grade.

U. S. UTILITY EARLY is provided for early varieties which may not be mature but which meet all other requirements for U.S. Utility grade. Combinations of these grades are also allowed and when two grades are packed in one package the word "combination" may be stamped on the package before the grade designation. A combination grade must contain at least 50% of apples of the highest grade in the combination.

When sold as graded apples under any of these grade names the containers must be plainly stamped not only with the grade name but also with the minimum size of the apples in terms of inches and fractions thereof, representing the transverse diameter of the apple taking it at right angles



to a line running from the stem to the blossom end. In other words, we may have U.S. Fancy apples, minimum size 2-1/2 inches, U.S. No. 1 apples, minimum size 2-1/2 inches, U.S. Commercial apples, minimum size 2-1/2 inches, and U.S. Utility apples minimum size, 2-1/2 inches. There is no minimum size requirements for the various grades, but in all cases the minimum size shall be plainly marked on the packages.

Apples not graded are known as Unclassified Apples.

A great many of the States, have apple grading laws: for example, New York State and Virginia have adopted the U.S. Grade specifications as official for their States.

Massachusetts calls its grades for apples, Mass. Fancy Grade, Mass. A Grade, Mass. B Grade, and Mass. Ungraded. The requirements in Massachusetts for corresponding grades do not differ greatly from the Federal requirements.

In Maine the grade names are Maine Standard Fancy Grade, Maine Standard A Grade, Maine Commercial, Maine Standard B Grade, and Maine Unclassified Grade.

In Michigan the grades for apples are defined under names as: Michigan Fancy Grade, Michigan A Grade, Michigan Uniform A Grade, Michigan B Grade, and Michigan Commercial Grade.

Each of the Northwestern States has established grades for apples which are known as Extra Fancy, Fancy and C grades. Combinations of these grades are permitted with appropriate label designations.

For the grade designations and grade requirements in your particular State, inquire of your Department of Agriculture. From a grade standpoint alone, Fancy apples are worth more money than No. 1 apples, No. 1 apples are worth more than the Commercial grade of apples, and Commercial Grade apples are worth more than Utility Grade apples. Generally, unclassified apples may be inferior in grade to any of the above, although this is not necessarily true. Now, my friends, can you not see that you should know the grade of apples, you are buying, that you should read labels to determine what grade you are getting when you pay your money for apples.

Now the careful label reader must remember that apples are usually branded and packed in the fall of the year and there may be subsequent deterioration. Decay, scald, internal breakdown, freezing, Jonathan spot, bitter pit and other condition factors may develop after packing. This deterioration may take place in storage, transit or while waiting to be sold on display in the retail stores. It is for this reason that you must, if you are a careful buyer, examine your purchases of apples for condition.

I have said that the variety of apples is a consideration which

should influence you in making your purchase. I do not mean that you need to buy the best variety always because most of the varieties of apples serve a very useful purpose in the diet, but depending upon the use to which you wish to put them, you may make your selections. If you intend your purchase for eating raw, then you will wish to buy one of the varieties on the market which suits your taste and the variety purchased need not be the best eating variety, according to the consensus of opinion, but if you do not get the best variety, then you should not pay the price of the best variety. On the other hand, if you intend to use the product for cooking, there is no reason why you should buy the best eating apples for this purpose, when a cheaper variety will serve the cooking purpose just as well and sometimes even better, because the best eating apples do not always cook well. If I may be understood, my advice is to know the variety of apple you are buying, to know its relative desirability from an eating or cooking quality standpoint, to know the relative price which you should pay for the variety of your choice. It will be impossible for me in my limited time to describe all of the hundreds of varieties of apples and their characteristics, relative qualities, and relative prices. There are 56 well known varieties, and the variety considered the best is a matter of taste. I may say, however, that with respect to eastern apples, the McIntosh, Northern Spy, Albemarle Pippin, Stayman's Winesap and the Greening are considered desirable and often the price of these varieties grade slightly down from the price of the McIntosh. With respect to box apples, or western apples, the Delicious variety, Jonathan, Winesap and Newtown Pippin are considered popular and often sell at prices which grade slightly down from that asked for the Delicious variety. Other varieties of good eating quality are Grimes Golden, Spitzenburg, the apple more suited to different tastes than any other apple, Maiden Blush, Baldwin, Red Astrachan, Northern Spy, Gravenstein, Winter Banana, Arkansas Black, the most beautiful of all apples, Rome Beauty, Golden Russet and Smokehouse. Apples such as York Imperial, Gano, Ben Davis, have poorer eating qualities but they keep well and they come to use usually at times when other varieties are scarce. Among the best cooking apples are varieties known as York Imperials, Gravenstein, Northern Spy, Rhode Island, Greening, one of the best for cooking, Maiden Blush, Twenty-Ounce, Wealthy, Hubbardston, Limbertwig and Winesap. In general, the acid or sub-acid apples are best for cooking.

You will find, in general, the varietal name stamped on the container and you should ask your dealer to let you see the stamp on the package from which he delivers your purchase.

Apples are packed in barrels, baskets, and boxes. The barrels are required by Federal statute to be of a definite size, and to contain 7,056 cubic inches, just slightly over 3-1/4 bushels. The standard one bushel basket contains 2,150 cubic inches. Western apples are almost always packed in boxes or bushel baskets. The Northwestern standard apple box is 18 inches by 11-1/2 inches by 10-1/2 inches, inside measurements giving it a cubic content of 2,174 cubic inches. Occasionally apples are packed in cartons. The quantity of contents in terms of "one barrel," or fraction thereof with respect to half barrels, or with respect to boxes, or with respect to small containers in terms of count, must appear on the outside of the package for you to see the quantity received, if you buy an original package. On the other hand, you may buy quantities in bulk, either by weight or measure.